LA 99ers Topics

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RAMBLIN' THOUGHTS FROM THE PRESIDENT

HERE WE ARE AGAIN ANOTHER MONTH, ANOTHER TIME TO FIGURE OUT WHAT TO WRITE ABOUT. SO MUCH HAS HAPPEND TO OUR CLUB AND ITS' MEMBERS THESE PAST FEW MONTHS THAT SOMTIMES YOU JUST DON'T KNOW WHAT WORDS WILL COME UP ON THE SCREEN WHEN YOU SIT DOWN AT A KEYBOARD. THIS IS ONE OF THOSE TIMES. WE LOST ONE OF OUR FAITHFUL MEMBERS TO A AUTO ACCIDENT, AND OUR PAST PRESIDENTS' MOTHER PASSED AWAY. IT MUST REALLY BE HARD ON A PERSON TO LOSE BOTH PARENTS IN THE SAME YEAR. BOTH FAMILYS HAVE ALL OUR DEEPEST SYMPATHY.

I COULD TELL THE MEMBERS WHAT THEY MIGHT MISS IF THEY DO NOT COME TO THE NEXT MEETING, BUT OUR PROGRAM CHAIRMAN UASALLY DOES THAT. I DONT KNOW IF HE IS GOING TO DO IT THIS TIME OR NOT.

I BELIEVE WE WILL HAVE ANOTHER INSTALLMENT OF THE TI-BASE MODULE AND TI THE TI-ARTIST PLUS MODUEL. IF NOT, FORGIVE ME FOR BEING GUILTY OF NOT KNOWING WHAT IS OR IS NOT HAPPENING. NOT A PLESENT PLACE FOR A LEADER TO BE IN. I APOLLOGIZE!!!

I HOPE STEVE MHER WILL HAVE TIME TO LOOK AT MY FORMSHOP PROGRAM TO FIND OUT WHY I GET A HALF PAGE FORM-FEED IN THE MIDDLE OF A LONG PRINT OUT. I DON'T KNOW ANYONE ELSE WHO HAS THE PROGRAM, THAT I COULD TALK ABOUT THIS PROBLEM.

I HAD HOPED THAT I WOULD GET SOME FEED-BACK ON MY CHALLANGE TO GET SOMTHING FROM THE MEMBERS. LIKE A QUESTION OR A PARAGRAPH ON ANY SUBJECT THAT THEY MAY HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT. MY MAIL BOX IS STUFFED WITH JUNK MAIL INSTEAD. IF YOU DO NOT WANT TO RECEICE A LOT OF JUNK MAIL; DON'T APPLY FOR A BUSINESS LICENSE. YOU WILL RECEIVE ABOUT 60 POUNDS A YEAR, AND MOST OF IT IS GOOD ONLY TO START FIRES IN FIRE-PLACES OR BAR-B-Q'S. (JUST JOKING ABOUT THE TWO FIREPLACES BECAUSE I THINK THAT IT IS AGAINST THE LAW IN THIS STATE.) MAYBE IT IS TOO SOON TO EXPECT A REPLY ANYWAY, (WE ALL KNOW HOW SLOW THE U. S. P. S. IS!!

THE LAST TI-FEST THAT I ATTENDED WAS THE ONE THAT WAS AT THE SHRINE AUDITORIUM. I AM LOOKING FOR THE OPERTUNITY TO GO TO THE ONE IN ORANGE COUNTY IN FEBRUARY. I MUST CONFESS THAT I HAVE NOT YET MET SOME OF THE VENDORS AND PROGRAMMERS THAT I READ ABOUT IN THE VARIOUS PUBLICATIONS. I HOPE TO MEET ALL OF THEM SOME DAY. I HAVE BEEN A MEMBER OF THE LA 99ers FOR A FEW YEARS BUT WITH HOLDING DOWN A FULL TIME JOB AND WITH FAMILY OBLIGATIONS I JUST CAN NOT ATTEND THE ONES THAT ARE VERY FAR AWAY. I WISH I HAD THE MONEY AND TIME TO GO TO THESE FESTS. ALL THOUGH I AM NOT WITH YOU ALL PHYSICALLY, I AM THERE WITH YOU AND SUPPORT YOUR EVERY EFFORT TO CONTINUE THE TI-COMMUNITY FOR AS LONG AS IT WILL LET US CONTINUE.

MY KEY-BOARD OR MY GRAY-MATTER HAS JUST RUN OUT OF THINGS TO WRITE AND THINK OF SO WE WILL SAY SO-LONG TILL THE NEXT TIME.

YOUR PRESIDENT

EDGAR A. MAY

PLEASE NOTE ZIP CODE ↘

TRANSITIONS

by Bill Gaskill

The month of August, 1990 has been a difficult one for me, at least from a computing perspective. Two old friends, PERSONAL COMPUTING magazine and PC RESOURCE magazine both produced their last issues this month and have closed their doors forever. Although both were MS-DOS publications, there is a message in their demise for all computer owners to hear. More on the message later. First, a little computer publication history.

PERSONAL COMPUTING was born in January 1976, way back in the dinosaur days before the IBM PC existed. I began subscribing to it in 1984 when I discovered that it actually mentioned the TI-99/4A in some of its articles and software listings. That kind of thing pretty much ended by the start of 1985, but I hung on to my subscription anyway, since I used PC's at work.

In the early '80's I jockied my computer magazine subscriptions among a host of different publications, staying with one for a year, dropping it and moving on to another. There were so many to choose from. Then in 1985 I began to notice that the computer magazine industry seemed to be going through a transition. Some of the stalwarts of the industry, or at least ones that I thought were stalwarts, started faltering, just like the myriad of personal computers that had faltered before them or along with them. It was the plethora of personal computers produced in the '80's that gave life to many of the magazines in the first place, so I guess their demise was sure to spell doom for the publications too.

PC RESOURCE was an upstart publication from the beginning. It targeted MS-DOS users at the novice to intermediate level, something that the folks at COMPUTE! Publications had tried before, when they created COMPUTE's PC and PC Jr. Magazine in March 1984. The PC and PC Jr. effort failed after only a few short months, ending with the October 1984 issue. PC Resource was born in April 1987, the product of the new PC Clone market that began to appear in 1986. PC Resource was clearly a clone owner's magazine. With the talents of programmers and authors the likes of Dave Rowell, John Wolfskill, Hardin Brothers and a host of other MS-DOS gurus, PC Resource seemed to have carved a niche for itself in the extremely competitive computer publications market. I guess I was wrong though. When I picked up the August 1990 issue and read the editorial that was titled "Time To Close The Doors", I was shocked. I honestly couldn't believe that this "stalwart" publication had gone down the tubes too. Boy was I fooled.

David H. Ahl, arguably one of the most influential pioneers of the PC computer publishing industry, announced the end of his brainchild, CREATIVE COMPUTING, in December 1985. It had been in existence since January of 1975. The failure of Creative Computing seemed to signal the beginning of the end. Many more computer type magazines would be sent to that great printing press in the sky before the decade ended.

Creative Computing can take credit for publishing perhaps one of the

most comprehensive articles on the demise of the TI-99/4A ever produced. Written by David Ahl, the article is found on page 30 of the March 1984 issue. In my opinion it far exceeds the completeness and insight found in the Joseph Nocera article of the same topic written for Texas Monthly. Through one reason or another, the Nocera article seems to have gained the status of being "the" resource or authority on the topic though.

In between the demise of Creative Computing and Personal Computing, one can find a graveyard full of both computers and magazines created out of the frenzy of personal computing in the 1980's.

POPULAR COMPUTING, a product of publishing giant McGraw-Hill, began its life in November 1982 and ceased publication with the December 1985 issue. In its hey-day the magazine sported the talents of such current day notables as Michael J. Miller, who now graces the pages of InfoWorld each week.

In March 1984 Popular Computing distinguished itself by being one of the very few non-TI-99 specific magazines to publish a program listing for the 4A. Speedmath, an educational application authored by George Stewart, appeared on page 209. In July of the same year Popular Computing's Associate Editor T.J. Beyers wrote an extensive article criticizing Texas Instruments for its decision to use the non-standard TMS9900 chip as the basis for the 4A. The article included an illustration borrowed from a 99er Magazine feature on 3-D Animation with sprites.

Among the best publications that I have ever had the privilege to read was the SIGNAL RESEARCH REPORT, a newsletter like tabloid that was created by former COMPUTE! Magazine editor Robert Lock. It came to life in June 1988 and was among the most valued publications to come across my desk at work. Although it was only about 15 pages per issue, it came out twice a month and contained some of the most concise writing I have ever seen in a commercial publication. Signal Research Report somehow managed to keep me abreast of what was going on in the hectic MS-DOS world without requiring 200 plus glossy pages to do it. Alas, it only lived about 6 months before succumbing to the pressures of competition. It folded in December 1988. Although the magazine may have been bankrupt in dollars, it certainly didn't seem bankrupt in talent.

COMPUTERS AND ELECTRONICS was another magazine that disappeared in the latter half of the 1980's. Perhaps it never found a comfortable niche in the computer publications market, but I found TI-99/4A material buried in it that the average reader probably overlooked, or just didn't care about. I don't know when C and E started exactly, 1962 I think, but I'm sure it was a real pioneer in the electronics magazine industry. As computers seemed to take over people's attention in the mid-1970's, I suppose C and E tried to adjust to the market. Somehow it apparently never made it. Computers and Electronics magazine was laid to rest in April or May 1985.

SOFT SECTOR, which was published out of Prospect, Kentucky, was originally a Sanyo 550-555 computer owner's magazine. Like 99ER MAGAZINE when it expanded its market by becoming HOME COMPUTER MAGAZINE, Soft Sector tried to survive by jumping onto the PC Clone explosion in 1986. It didn't last much more than a year though, giving

up the ghost in November 1987. Unlike other PC Clone magazines, but exactly like MICROpendium, Sott Sector targeted the owner of an out-of-production computer. The big difference is that MICROpendium is still around.

PC CLONES was yet another publication that sprang to life as a result of the PC clone explosion. It was the product of the former TI-99/4A supporters at COMPUTER SHOPPER (Patch Communications) and it lasted from November 1987 until about May 1988 I believe (don't quote me on that one). Although I bought every issue that hit the news stands, I never subscribed to it. The magazine somehow never developed a personality of its own. It was drab and dead just like Computer Shopper. Only Computer Shopper didn't have to have a lively and personable appeal. It was, and I presume still is, THE place to go for the best mail order deal in town.

No doubt there are a host of other computer magazines that have come and gone that I never knew about. I have never been much of an Apple Computer fan so I've not followed its support publication history. I know that there are a couple of Tandy specific magazines out there too. The bottom line seems to be that "it's a jungle out there" in the highly competitive publication industry. For a computer publication to survive today, it must require some kind of tenacity, and a tremendous support/subscriber base.

We know that in our own TI-99/4A and Geneve community we've lost 99er Magazine, Home Computer Magazine, Home Computer Journal, Home Computer Digest, the IUG Newsletter, Enthusiast 99, The Smart Programmer, Super 99 Monthly, the R/D Computing newsletter, The Unofficial 99/4(A)newsletter, the International Home Computer Users newsletter and TIHOME TIdings. We also lost the support of Compute! Magazine, Computer Shopper and Family Computing (now called Home Office Computing), each of which used to publish 99/4A programs, articles and advertisements.

99er MAGAZINE began in May of 1981 with Volume 1, Number 1, which was a bi-monthly issue (published every other month). In November 1982 publisher Gary Kaplan and company went to monthly issues. This lasted until December 1983 when 99er did a disappearing act that no doubt left subscribers scratching their heads and magazine vendors probably wondering what was going on too.

Then in February 1984 HOME COMPUTER MAGAZINE appeared on the news stands and in the homes of former 99er Magazine subscribers. Kaplan and company had pulled a fast one on everybody by expanding the scope of 99er Magazine to include Apple, Commodore and IBM/IBM PC Jr. as well as the 99/4A. The honeymoon lasted until March 1986 when Home Computer Magazine also did a disappearing act. Loyal subscribers got a pitiful looking publication in the mail one day called Home Computer Journal. Included was a notice that said this one HCJ issue was all that current Home Computer Magazine subscribers were going to get in the way of compensation for their remaining subscription dollars. In my case that meant 2 years and 10 months worth of Home Computer Magazine in exchange for 1 issue of Home Computer Journal. What a bargain! I have no idea how long Home Computer Journal lasted, but I can't imagine it was much more than 3 or 4 issues. It was produced by former 99er Magazine and Home Computer Magazine editor David G. Brader, with Gary Kaplan as consultant.

Both the IUG NEWSLETTER and ENTHUSIAST 99 were TI-99 specific publications that were produced by Charles LaFara and the crew at the International Users Group headquarters in Bethany, Oklahoma. The IUG Newsletter was published twice in 1980 (V1/N1 and V1N2), eight times in 1981 (V1/N3-V1/N8), six times in 1982 (V2/N1-V2/N6) and two times in 1983 (V3/N1 and V3/N2). LaFara put it to rest with the decision to produce Enthusiast 99.

In its shorter though perhaps more glamorous life, Enthusiast 99, "The Official Publication of the International Users Group", was able to attract authors the likes of John Phillips, Cheryl REGENA Whitelaw and Bill Gronos (of Hidden Powers of Disk Fixer fame) at one time or another. But the majority of the articles were written by LaFara or members of the IUG "staff". Enthusiast 99 does have the distinction of being the only publication (that I have ever found) to print a photo of the never-released Choplifter game module written for the 99/4A. It's on page 47 of the Sep 1983 issue. Enthusiast 99 issues exist for May 1983 (V1N1), Jul 1983 (V1N2), Sep 1983 (V1N3), Nov 1983 (V1N4), Jan 1984 (V2N1), Mar 1984 (V2N2) and May/Jun 1984 (V2N3).

THE SMART PROGRAMMER was a monthly programmer's newsletter that was produced by Craig Miller of Millers Graphics and later MG notoriety. It was brought to life in February 1984 and lasted until January 1987 under the ownership of Craig Miller and then Richard Mitchell. In June 1986 Miller sold the publication rights to Mitchell, who was already publishing the Super 99 Monthly. Mitchell maintained the high publication standards set by Miller and continued producing The Smart Programmer until January 1987. That was the last issue.

During the Miller ownership era most of the material come from Miller himself, with Los Angeles area 99er Hector Santos helping out with the TI-Forth articles. During the Mitchell era of ownership, notable writers such as Barry Traver graced the pages of The Smart Programmer.

SUPER 99 MONTHLY began its life in September 1984, but had pre-release announcements as far back as July 1984. Publisher Richard Mitchell, who now writes information bases for attorneys using IBM and compatible computers, produced a newsletter that was very similar to The Smart Programmer. So much so in fact, that Mitchell combined the two when he purchased TSP in 1986. It was in February 1986 that he announced the merger of the two publications. Thus Super 99 Monthly officially ceased to exist in that month, although the knowledge and expertise of Richard Mitchell and his writers continued on until The Smart Programmer died in 1987.

Unofortunately, I can't tell you much about THE UNOFFICIAL 99/4(A) newletter except that it existed in 1983, was published by DeBeer Brasses in Clute, Texas, and someone named M.T. Leyton was the editor.

In my wanderings over the last seven years I had only run across mention of it once, and made a mental note to see if I could dig up more information. As luck and old age would have it, I forgot about it (should have written it down, Bill). Jerry Price of TexComp brought The Unofficial 99/4(A) back into the limelight recently when he sent me a copy of the March-April 1983 issue.

Reading inside the taloid I did find out that it apparently started with the November-December 1982 issue and was available for $10 per

year, for six issues. Assistance to the novice programmer seemed to be the main emphasis of the newsletter, and it was apparently known well enough to have drawn a full page ad from Elek-Tek, the current day MS-DOS mail order giant, that used be a 99/4A mail order giant.

TIHOME TIdings was first released in February 1981 in England. The first issue of the magazine was sent free to 14 British users by publisher Paul Dicks, apparently in an effort to create a TI Users Group in the United Kingdom.

As far as I can determine, TIHOME TIdings was a montlhy publication, and the policy of giving the magazine away free to British 99ers continued until December 1981. At that point it became available on a subscription or single copy purchase basis.

Despite the contributions of such United Kingdom and European notables as Stephen Shaw, Peter Brooks and Paul Karis supporting it, TIHOME TIdings shut down in May 1983. Karis, you might recall, is credited with discovering the hidden secrets of the PRK module and its CALL A,D,G,H,L,P and S features that were accessible from Console Basic with the Personal Record Keeping module plugged in.

COMPUTE! MAGAZINE began life as a Commodore Pet enthusiast's publication in January 1978. The original magazine was actually a newsletter named The Pet Gazette, and it was founded by a man named Len Lindsay. Lindsay published The Pet Gazette for over a year as a non-profit making enterprise before turning it over to a Greensboro, N.C. firm named Small System Services. In the Fall of 1979 Small Systems Services brought out Compute Magazine as a quarterly "...Journal of Progressive Computing". It covered mainly Commodore and Atari computers at that point, but did feature articles on how to make hardware mods and such to other computers like the OSI C1P. How many of you remember that computer? I'll bet Norman Spector does.

In October 1982 Compute! (I don't know when they picked up the exclamation point in their name) began advertising for TI-99/4A articles, tutorials and applications. By January 1983 they must have built up a sufficient stock of material, because in that month they began including 99/4A programs and the like in each issue.

The Small System Services company became Compute! Publications in July 1983 and was ultimately swallowed up by giant ABC publications in September of that year. Despite this, Compute! continued to support the TI-99/4A. February of 1986 signaled the beginning of the end of TI support though. From that issue, until the October 1986 issue, Cheryl REGENA Whitelaw's monthly column on TI Basic programming was the only 99/4A material to be found in the entire magazine. The November 1986 issue had nothing on the 99/4A. The only other mention of the TI that I ever found afterwards was in the September 1988 10th Anniversary issue of Compute!, when they alluded to having supported eight different computers in 1983, the 99/4A among them. Despite discontinuing 99/4A support, Compute! Publications ranks among the strongest 99/4A supporters in the computer's history, second only to MICROpendium I believe.

Family Computing was another former 99/4A supporter, but in a very minor way. The few programs that did appear were written in TI Basic (with only one exception that I can think of off the top of my head)

and the focus of the prorams were absolutely juvenile. By juvenile, I'm talking about programs that made Halloween pumpkins and such on the screen. Not real advanced material. I never really cared for the magazine so I admit to having a void in knowledge of its TI-99/4A support.

So, now that I have covered just about all of the useless trivia rambling around in my head on this topic, what does it all mean? I think that there is a final message that I would like to leave you with that ties it all together. Right now, MICROpendium stands alone as the only commercial publication supporting our computer (Asgard's Reflections magazine not withstanding). Without it, the TI-99/4A and Geneve community would cease to exist as we know it. If it can happen in the mighty MS-DOS world, it can sure happen one day to us. Wouldn't it be a tragedy to receive a notice in the mail one day that MICROpendium had closed its doors? I think it would. If you are not a MICROpendium subscriber already, then please become one today. If your computer means anything to you, and if you want to continue to see new products developed for it, MICROpendium must survive for developers to have a national audiance to market to. Without a medium such as that provided by the folks at MICROpendium, there would be no way for new products to be announced, and hence no new products. Suscription cost is $25 per year for 12 issues, mailed to MICROpendium Box 1343 Round Rock, Texas 78680. It is truly an investment in your computing future.

IF YOU MISS THIS MONTH'S MEETING, YOU'LL MISS PLENTY!

On the agenda for Sept. (Wed. the 26th.) is:

SPELL-IT . . . . . .demonstrated by Steve Mehr
TI-ARTIST Enhancement Module. . . Alonzo Slade
Introduction to TIBase Ver.3.01 . Fred Moore
A door prize . . . and other surprises.
(There may not be any refreshments...no-one has volunteered to replace the late Myron Harms. Please consider this position, we pay for all materials, we even help clean up after-wards. All you do is purchase the goodies, and make the coffee (in our Perk.)!
(P.S. You get to take home anything left over!)
WE REALLY NEED SOME-ONE. COME ON, YOU CAN DO IT!

THANK YOU THANK YOU

The colorful insert on the NX 1000 Rainbow printer is the contribution of Dan O'Quinn of Waterboro, SC. It was quite an ambitious undertaking. I wish to extend my personal thanks.

THANK YOU EDITOR

1990 COMPUTER FAIRE SCHEDULE

Computer shows and fairs are the place for bargins on computers, software, perpherels, parts, paper, labels, ribbons supplies, and books. We are reminded of this by the LITI 99ers.

This list of faires is only a partial list and is meant to reaffirm the fact that the TI community is alive and doing well.

Aug. 11th 1990 LongIsland SHOW - Sheriton Hotel, Smithtownlie Exit 54

Aug. 12th 1990 Suffren NY Executive Park Hotel, NY thruway exit 14D

Aug 18th 1990 Hackensack NJ FDU-Rothman Center. Off route 4 on Hackensack Ave.

Sept. 15th 1990 Wayne, NJ Wm Paterson College Rec. Ctr. Tre.23 off I-80

Oct. 7th 1990 Central Penn. 99/4A U.G. 4th annual fair. Nat. Guard Armory, Palmdale

Oct. 14th 1990 Long Island Melvillle, NY Royce Carlin Hotel. LIE exit 49 Rte 110

Oct. 21st 1990 CHerry Hill NJ. Garden State Park open 10 AM to 3 PM

Oct 28th 1990 Parsippany, NJ Aspin Manor, Rte 46 west near I-80 (also open 10 to 3:00)

Nov. 2-3 1990 Chicago TI-Fair Write Chocago TI U.G. PO BOX 578341, Chicago, Ill 60657

NOv. 11th 1990 Secaucus, NJ Meadowlands Hotel, Rte 3 off NJ Turnpike

Dec. 15th 1990 Wayne, NJ Wm.Patterson College Rec. Ctr. Rte. 20 off te 80

Dec. 16th 1990 Edison, NJ Raritan Center EXpo. Hall NJ turnpike exit 10

Feb. 16-17 1991 Fest West 91 Ramada Main Gate, Anaheim CA across from Disneyland Hot.

March 1991 T.I.C.O.F.F. Roselle Park, NJ at the Roselle Park High School.

NOTE: Feb. 1986 issue of MICRO-pendium listed five such events held that year:

Four years latter, I know of several faires being held in Canada. Last month I did an article about one in Germany "TI VACATION ANYONE?") The following are other I read about in various newsletters:

* Boston Computer Society

* TI99/4A National Users Assoc. of Canada

* Music City 99er U.G. of Nashville, TN

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From the pen of
I. C. Hue

Wouldn't these be ideal names?

Lawyer firm: Dewey, Cheatum and Howe
A researcher: I. M. Sureyrite
A body-man: Dr Denton Fender

This is by no means a complete list, but it does serve to show that our TI/4A is far from ready to pass on into oblivion. We (the LA 99ers) have also had a table at the Shrine Computer shows.
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FORTH

CONTINUING FORTH #3
By Earl Raguse

NUMBER FORMATTING

In BEGINNING FORTH #3, I bored you with the reasons why Forth integer numbers were limited to a range of +32767 to -32768 or 2 to the 15th power -1 to -2 to the 15th power. Now that just happens not to be quite the 100% limit. Forth, at least TI Forth, supports Double Length numbers and these can vary from 2 to the 31st power -1 to -2 to the 31st power, which is a range of 2,147,483,647 to -2,147,483,648. Now those are big numbers, unless of course, your hobby is counting the grains of sand on the beach, or tracking the national debt.

How do you get Forth to use these Double Length numbers? Easy, just put at least one decimal point in the number. How do you print them? Just as easy, with D. (D dot). If you input numbers that are too large, you get strange results. I don't expect to need larger numbers, If I do I will simply load -FLOAT.

Why not use these Double Length numbers all the time then? Because like Floating Point Arithmetic, they are slower, and a bit more awkward to use. Also TI didn't provide many operators for Double Length (DL) numbers. Signed DL numbers are denoted by d,d1,d2 etc. Unsigned DL numbers are denoted by ud, ud1, ud2 etc. The resident operators for DL numbers are D. (print), D+ (add), D- (subtract), DABS (double absolute) and D.R (print right aligned numbers in a column n wide), D+- (sign control), and DMINUS (convert to 2's complement).

Also there are the Mixed Length operators M* , M/ , and M/MOD that process DL numbers with SL numbers. Some Forths have a word, CONVERT to convert a SL number to a DL number, but TI doesn't. You can write one however, very simply.

: CONVERT 1 M* ;

Actually, just putting another 0 on the stack, ie a zero MSH, will also do the job. Try entering this, 12345 1 M* .S, and you will find 12345 0 on the stack, but D. will print 12345 not 0.

Other more complex words for double and triple length, as well as mixed length, math operators and stack manipulators have been written for TI Forth, by scientific users, but I doubt if they warrant space here. If you really have need for them contact me.

So much for big numbers, I don't have much use for them, except when I need format control of numbers, like phone numbers, such as mine, 714/847-5875. or time-of-day, like 12:23:17, or a date to be written as 7/06/88, or money written as $-1234567.89, (note the possibility of using the minus sign). The formating words in Forth work on DL numbers, because in general any quantity expressed in 6 or more digits, will exceed Forth's single length integer limits.

Screen #43 contains some words which you might someday find useful. Their names are: .PH, .TIME, .DATE, AND .$. Their names should be a giveaway as to their purpose. Also, .PH is made up of two separate words .AC and .PH#. If for any reason one does not need the Area Code, the word .PH# does the job. Each word works independently, therefore .PH needs the AC on top of the stack. after the phone number instead of as it would normally be written. Remember Forth's LIFO (Last In First Out) stack. Screen 44 has instructions and examples to show how the words are used.

The Numeric Formatting words <# (less sharp), #> (sharp greater), # (sharp), #S (sharp S), HOLD , and SIGN, are listed in Chapter 2, Page 6 of the TIFM. The words are individually given in Appendix D, pages 2, 10, 37, and 42. Page 10 has what purports to be an example, but doesn't say what the example actually does. It is really just a syntax example. It also does not contain the important formatting word HOLD. There is much that is not said. I learned how the make these words work by hard experimentation.

Any formatting statement must begin with <# and end with #>, which stores an address and character count for TYPE. In between, you may use one or more # symbols which pick up digits off the stack. You may also do arithmetic operations. The word HOLD preceeded by an ASCII character number inserts that character into the conversion stream, the word SIGN prints a - if the sign of the Most Significant Half (MSH) of the DL number is negative. Recall that a DL number is stored as two 16 bit numbers, with the MSH on top. SIGN looks for the sign of the MSH 16 bit number three cells down in the stack, ie under the Least Significant Half (LSH) of a DL number. Hence before executing SIGN, you must do a SWAP OVER to put a copy of the MSH under the LSH. The word #S may be used to finish converting all the rest of a number, after all the punctuation has been added.

C U later, May the FORTH be with U.

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SCR 43
 0  \ NUMBER FORMATTING 1/2 EGR 6/7/88
 1  FORGET IT : IT ; : // 47 HOLD ;
 2  : .AC    ( ud --) <# //  # # #  #>      \ prints Area Code
 3            TYPE ;
 4  : .PH#   ( ud --) <#  # # # #           \ prints Phone Number
 5           45 HOLD #S #> TYPE SPACE ;
 6  : .PH    ( ud ud --) .AC .PH# ;         \ prints both
 7  : .DATE  ( ud --) <# # # // # #         \ prints Date (m/d/y)
 8           // #S #> TYPE SPACE ;
 9  : 6BASE 6 BASE ! ;
10  : :00 # 6BASE # DECIMAL 56 HOLD ;       \ converts sec to h/m
11  : .TIME ( ud --) <# :00 :00 #S #>       \ prints Time (h/m/s)
12           TYPE SPACE ;
13  : .$   ( d --) SWAP OVER DABS <#         \ prints money w/ $/-
14           # # 46 HOLD #S SIGN 36 HOLD
15           #> TYPE SPACE ;  -->

SCR 44
 0  \ NUMBER FORMATTING 2/2  EGR 6/7/88 ) CLS 0 2 AT
 1  ." NUMBER FORMATING WORDS " CR CR
 2  ."  .PH# .DATE .TIME .$ are available. " CR CR
 3  ."  All require Double Length numbers " CR
 4  ."  on the stack, at least one decimal " CR
 5  ."  makes a DL number, more may be used." CR CR
 6  ."    DIGITS    required: " CR CR
 7  ."      7   .PH# and 3 .AC for .PH " CR
 8  ."          Ex: 847.5875  714. .PH " CR
 9  ."      6   (incl lead 0's) for .DATE, " CR
10  ."          Ex: 07.06.88  .DATE (m/d/y) " CR
11  ."      1-8 for .$, (negative ok) " CR
12  ."          Ex: 123456.78 .$ " CR
13  ."      1-8 (seconds) for .TIME (h/m/s) " CR
14  ."          Ex: 86461. or 86.461 .TIME " CR  CR CR
15  ."  SEE Screens 43 and 44 for the words " CR
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The Cracker Barrel

by Chick De Marti

Sept. 1990

IN THE NEWS

What can we expect next? First McDonalds, and now the American Computer Co. will open franchises in Russia! Computer Land, according to Michael Tseytin, manager and owner has opened a franchise in Moscow. More than 1 million worth of IBM ATs and XTs and compatibles have been sold to the Soviet government thus far this yr. Micro Age will have opened it's store by this summer, according to Duane Hall the company's VP of International Operations.

"Most systems purchased by the Soviets are lower power units..."

I found this information in Personal Computer, March '90

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TI-WRITER HINT

Excerpt FROM MORE TRIVIA by Howard McDonald, via the POMONA VALLEY 99ers.

(As you know, in TI-WRITER, the Formatter automatically adds two spaces after a period) "...as you always get at the end of a sentence. (Using the transliterate command you can...)put in a period without the extra space. To use the (') grave as a substitute, type in:

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.TL 96:46   (96 = grave)
            (46 = period)
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on a line of it's own." Other suggestions in the article were:

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.TL 59:64   ( ; to - @ )
.TL 92:38   ( \ to = & )
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(I prefer 124:64 (¦ to = @)

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"An ounce of pretention, is worth a pound of manure".

CREATE TIW-start

Many of us who use a word-processor, use it to write the same type of document over and over again. Exams.: newsletters, business letter, etc.

Therefore many of the formatting requirements will usually be the same. So it would make sense to somehow have the wordprocessor pre-programmed, not only as a time-saver, but also as a friendly reminder.

Our president uses a 1" margin on either side of the page, and a page-length of 56 lines for his "Ramblings of the President" Col. and uses condenced type. Plus he likes the lines evenly lined up on the right (as well as the left) so his start-up program has listed:

```
.LM 10;RM 70
.PL 56
27,66    (Ctrl U, shift A)
.AD;FI
```

These four lines are typed in and saved as: TIW-START and each time he decides to write an article, he simply loads his TIW-START, types in the article, and when finished, saves it as RAMBL/0890 (or whatever).

NOTE: Rather than load TIW-START you could start off your article with:

```
.IF TIW-START
```

The formatter would first search out and pre-load it BEFORE it prints out your document.

~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~

I LOVE IT, I LOVE IT!

"Fortunately the computer virus did no harm to our records. It was immediately devoured by the bugs in our programming".
~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~

FOR THE MORE ADVENTURESOME

To the TIW-START above you might also include some of the hints of the article above TIWRITER HINTS. I use:

```
.TL 124:65   ( | = @ )
.TL 35:38    ( # = % )
.TL 96:46    ( ' = . )
.TL 123:27,45,1
     (Ctrl-U,minus sigh)
.TL 125:27,45,0
```

The 123 uses the left harp ({) to start underlining...the 125 uses the right harp (}) to end underlining. After a while, these substitute signs become second mature.

~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~

MULTIPLAN

Bob Wheeler, a friend of mine and a member of our computer group called with a problem. "My Multiplan locks up at odd times...never at the same point...Yes, I already have an 'anti-static' pad...I also tried using someone else's Multiplan to see if my copy had a glitch in it."

I had no answers for him and had planned on putting in a plea on his behalf to all of you Multiplan users. Later, he called as I was practicing on the piano.

"I found out what was wrong", he laughed. "i've been pressing the keys pizzicato, when I should have been pressing them MULTI-LAGATO".

~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~

From Bob Delpit comes this:

PUZZLE	SOLUTION
TEN	850
TEN	850
+ FORTY	+ 29786
SIXTY	31486

Remember, each letter represents a digit. Challenge: Write a program to solve it!

~~~~~~~~~~~~

* TRIVIA *

What is the name of the person whose voice is on the Parsec Modual?

Thanx to Gary Bishop of Cedar Valley 99ers come the answer to the TRIVIA question.

"On page 40 of Home Computer Magazine. Feb 1983 is an interview with Aubree Anderson, then a Jr.in Geology in Texas Tech. She recorded many phrases and words to be used as a model for your Parsec side-kick computer.

~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~

TI in the MOVIES ?

Thanx Brisbane UG, Australia.

DID YOU KNOW:
that the TI99 made a cameo appearrance toward the end of a movie called "The Terror Within", starring Lee Marvin.

DID YOU KNOW:
that pressing shift-E while loading or saving a cassette will abort the procedure?

(Thanx and g'day mates. cdm)

~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~

From TI*MES newsletter (England).. comes this reminder:
DID YUU KNOW:
you can have more than one item for a VALIDATE...for Exam.:

```
10 ACCEPT AT(5,1)VALIDATE (D
IGIT,"Q")BEEP:F$
```

This will accept the ten digits and the letter "Q".

~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~

I'm out of coffee,
See you next month
at the Cracker Barrel

Bonus Page
The Cracker Barrel

I'm sorry I don't remember where this elaborate merge routine came from (by the line-numbers I suspect it could be a Peterson creation. I however quote the article verbatim.

Key this in, save it by SAVE DSK1.INVERSE,MERGE and then merge it to any program by MERGE DSK1.INVERSE.
Call it at any point by:
CALL INVERSE(A,B)
(A and B are the 1st and last ASCII to be inverted) and you will have all 'ON' pixels turned off or vice-versa.
NOTE: (I added the first 6 lines to demo the routine...cdm)

```
100 CALL CLEAR
110 PRINT " Enter start & fi
nish ASCII":"number of char
acters to be"
120 INPUT "INVERSED: ":A,B
130 PRINT "Enter message to
be inverted"
140 INPUT MSG$
150 CALL CLEAR :: PRINT MSG$
 :: CALL INVERSE(A,B)
160 CALL KEY(0,K,S):: IF S=0
 THEN 160 ELSE END
31111 SUB INVERSE(A,B):: FOR
 CH=A TO B :: CALL CHARPAT(C
H,CH$)
31112 FOR J=1 TO 16 :: CH2$=
CH2$&SEG$("FEDCBA9876543210"
,POS("0123456789ABCDEF",SEG$
(CH$,J,1),1),1):: NEXT J ::
CALL CHAR(CH,CH$):: CH2$=""
 :: NEXT CH
31113 SUBEND
```

NOTE: Type in the 1st 5 lines of of line 31112, press enter then press Fctb-8 to cont.

As I said up front, it is a very elaborate program. I typed it in, it works as advertised but takes a month of Sundays to search each letter (alphabetically) one by one and then INVERT it. I used as a message "PRESS ANY KEY TO CONTINUE"

P.S. In no way is this routine to be considered as an improvement over Jim's routine, it is simply one better suited to my to my needs.

```
100 CALL CLEAR
110 CALL CHAR(96,"0000000000
00000")
120 FOR I=9 TO 13 :: CALL CO
LOR(I,1,2):: NEXT I
130 PRINT "'press'any'key'to
'continue'";"''''''''''''''
''''''''''"
140 CALL KEY(0,K,S):: IF S=0
 THEN 140 ELSE END
```

~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~

QUICKIES

TIP ... Uncle Miltie's Corner

* To use a colored cursor in a program, try:

```
CALL COLOR(0,F,B)
      (F)oreground
      (B)ackground
```

~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~

TI-Base Hint

While in the edit mode of TI-Base. you can 'ZAP' to the top line by pressing Fctn-6.

NICE PIECE OF CODING

In Dec. 1985 issue of MICROpendium, in Barry Comer's 'Tips for Wycove Forth users', I saw this interesting use of CALL KEY.

```
230 PRINT "Want another (Y/N)"
240 CALL KEY(0,K,S):: IF S=0
 THEN 240
250 ON POS("YN",CHR$(K),1)+1
 GOTO 240,180,260
260 CALL CLEAR :: END
```

Obviously line 180 will repeat the wanted routine. (I like it!)

[See ya next month ... Chick]

NEW ADDS

LA99ER USERS GROUP MARKETPLACE
09/09/90

NO.	NAME	DISTRIBUTER	MEMBER PRICE	CAL. TAX	----- MAILING ----- USA	CAN.	EUR.	AUS
169	CASSETTE SYSTEM	MICKEY SCHMITT	5.00	.34	1.50	1.65	3.19	3.9
	BY MICHEY SCHMITT-A 52 PAGE BOOKLETT "GETTING THE MOST FROM YOUR CASSETTE SYSTEM" FOR YOUR TI. ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT CASSETTES.							
171	HARDBACK	T AND T HARDWARE	12.00	.81	.70	.77	1.57	1.7
	BY TOM FREEMAN-BACKUP PROGRAM FOR THE MRARC HDCC-1 HARD DRIVE CONTROLLER. BACKUP ANY PORTION OF YOUR HARD DRIVE TO A 2ND HARD DRIVE.							

FEATURING COMPRODINE INC.

LA99ER USERS GROUP MARKETPLACE
09/09/90

NO.	NAME	DISTRIBUTER	MEMBER PRICE	CAL. TAX	----- MAILING ----- USA	CAN.	EUR.	AUS
107	ARTIST PRINT SHOP	COMPRODINE INC.	22.50	1.57	1.10	1.15	2.55	3
	BY PAUL COLEMAN-MANUAL = 3 DISKS. PRINT YOUR OWN STATIONERY, BANNERS AND SIGNS USING ANY TI-ARTIST INSTSNCES OR FONTS.							
105	CARD FLYER GRAPHICS	COMPRODINE INC.	9.00	.60	.70	.77	1.57	1.7
	BY ROGER MERRITT-A COLLECTION OF 40 MORE BORDERS. 48 NEW PICTURES. 2 NEW FONTS + PROGRAM TO DESIGN YOUR OWN BONDERS.							
67	COLOR CARD	COMPRODINE INC.	22.50	1.46	.70	.77	1.57	1.7
	BY MERRITT/ROBINSON- CREATE AND PRINT A FOUR FOLD PROFESSIONAL LOOKING GREETING CARD IN COLOR. VERY QUICKLY AND EASILY WITH GRAPGIC.							
68	COLOR FLYER	COMPRODINE INC.	18.00	1.17	.70	.77	1.57	1
	BY MERRITT/ROBINSON- CREATE AND PRINT A PROFESSIONAL LOOKING FLYER IN COLOR. VERY QUICKLY AND EASLY WITH GRAPHICS.							
65	FORM SHOP	COMPRODINE INC.	14.00	.91	.70	.77	1.57	1.7
	BY RODGER MERITT- CREATE BARGRAPHS, MAPS, CALENDARS, RECEIPTS ANYTHING THAT REQUIRES LINES OR BOXES.							
64	GIANT ARTIST POSTER	COMPRODINE INC.	14.00	.91	.70	.77	1.57	1.7
	BY PAUL COLEMAN- PRINTS GAINTS POSTERS FROM 10 BY 14 TO 64 BY 200. DIFFERENT FONTS AND GRAPHIC. USES TI-ARTIST.							
62	JIFFY CARD	COMPRODINE INC.	14.00	.91	.70	.77	1.57	1.7
	BY RODGER MERRITT- CREATE AND PRINT A FOUR FOLD PROFESSIONAL LOOKING GREETING CARD. VERY QUICKLY AND EASILY WITH GRAPHIC.							
63	JIFFY FLYERS	COMPRODINE INC.	9.00	.65	.70	.77	1.57	1.7
	BY RODGER MERRITT- CREATE AND PRINT A PROFESSIONAL LOOKING FLYER QUICKLY AND WITH EASE WITH GRAPHIC. V3.0							
106	LIVING TOMB	COMPRODINE INC.	13.50	.91	.70	.77	1.57	1.7
	BY QUINTON TORMANEN-A JOYSTICK ADVENTURE TYPE GAME. GRAPHIC, SOUND, STORYLINE AND SPEECH.							
40	PICTURE IT	COMPRODINE INC.	9.00	.65	.90	.99	2.06	3.3
	BY ROGER MERRITT- CONVERTS, DISPLAYS, VIEW, PRINT OR CREATE A BANNER. CONVERTS AND DISPLAY INSTANCES. DISK A-Z OR FONTS.							
66	PRINT-IT	COMPRODINE INC.	12.00	.78	.90	.99	2.09	3.3
	BY RODGER MERRITT- CREATE LETTERS, LABELS SMALL OR LARGE, SCRIP, GRAPHIC ETC. A COMPLETE PACKAGE OF SIX DISKS.							
104	WAR ZONE	COMPRODINE INC.	9.00	.60	.70	.77	1.57	1.7
	BY QUINTON TORMANEN-AN ACTION TYPE GAME USING JOYSTICK. FLY AN F-15 IN YEAR 2000AD TO RECOVER YOUR LAND THE ENEMY HAS TAKEN.							

LAST MONTH WE GAVE A LIBRARY DISK TO ANYONE WHO GAVE ME THEIR SYSTEM (SSSD DSSS DSDD) REQUIREMENT. WE HAD A GOOD RETURN BUT NOT FROM ALL OF OUR MEMBERS. LET TRY IT AGAIN THIS MONTH LET ME KNOW YOUR SYSTEM AND I WILL GIVE YOU A LIBRARY DISK.

WE ALSO HAVE OVER 200 DISKS FROM CHICAGO USERS GROUP. THE ONLY PROBLEM IS THEIR CATALOG IS ON PAPER IN TWO BOOKLETT 1-100 AND 101-200. THE COST OF PRINTING IS $1.00 EACH PLUS $1.00 MAILING. IF YOU WANT ANY LET ME KNOW.
FRED MOORE 7730 EMERSON AVE.LOS ANGELES,CA 90045

PETER GLEED

OUR SYMPAPHY TO HIS FAMILY

HIS FRIENDS AND TO

AUSTRALIA TI USERS GROUPS

MAY HE REST IN PEACE

FROM LA99 USERS GROUP

TI 99er Club News

A great loss

Myron Harms who died Aug 5th. 1990 was a silent worker for the LA 99ers. For years he has maintained our refreshment area (I believe many times out of his own pocket). I can't think of anytime we said "Thank you." This holds true for all the volunteers. His loss will become more evident as time goes by...for no one feels it's their duty to help out here. Good bye Myron, a great friend to all TIers.

DOOR PRIZE WINNER

The club has decided to give a door prize to a lucky member present at the meeting. The winner at the Aug. meeting was Roland Ellingson one of 20 members present, a nice turn-out.

****

LA 99er Committee Members

Equipment Mgr. John Bohlier
Librarian: (How about you?)
Market Place: Fred Moore
Membership VP Hal Jeffrey
Prog.Chairman Steve Mehr
Refreshment: (H e l p)
LA 99er STORE Gail Fair

S E P T E M B E R

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	21
23	24	25	26	27	28	29

Meeting this month - Sept. 26th

ADVERTISING SPACE

A reminder that advertising space is available in our newsletter with a circulation of over 250 dedicated TI users.
Prices for COPY READY articles are: Full page $12.00
Half page 7.00
Quarter page 4.00

Members may advertise personal items at no charge. However the editor reserves the right to edit if size gets out of hand.

LA 99er Officers for 1990

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